

Longacre's Ledger

The Journal of The Flying Eagle and Indian Cent Collectors' Society

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The Flying Eagle and Indian Cent Collectors' Society

Our mission is to gather and disseminate information related to
James B. Longacre (1794-1869), with emphasis on his work as
Chief Engraver of the Mint (1844 -1869) with a primary focus on his
Flying Eagle and Indian Cent coinage.

Founded 1991

www.fly-inclub.org

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On the cover...

The 1880 Snow-1 off-center clashed die is the best example of this very unusual die variety. The impression of the denticles and "OF" from an obverse die are visible on the reverse. What caused this unusual die clash? Rick Snow discusses possible answers in this issue.

Special thanks to Heritage Auctions for printing this issue of Longacre's Ledger

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If you have a substantive article you would like to contribute, please follow these guidelines:

- ✓ If you have internet access, you can send text to the editor's e-mail address below. Please send images in separate files.
- ✓ You may also send files and images on a CD-W disk or other storage device to the editor's address below. Storage devices will be returned upon request.
- ✓ Images of material can be made by the editor for use in the Journal. Please include the necessary return postage with the submission.
- ✓ Please feel free to contact the editor if you have any questions.

Submission deadlines

Please submit all articles, letters, columns, press releases and advertisements no later than the following dates to assure inclusion:

Issue	Deadline	Show issue
#85 2012 Vol. 22.2	July 1, 2012	ANA 2012
#86 2012 Vol. 22.3	November 1, 2012	FUN 2013
#87 2013 Vol. 23.1	March 1, 2013	CSNS 2013
#85 2013 Vol. 23.2	July 1, 2013	ANA 2012

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Special thanks to Charmy Harker for
proofreading the articles.

The President's Letter

By Chris Pilliod

This is my 42nd letter as president and it continues to be a fascinating journey working with the Mint on its new Coinage Act. There have been hours and hours and more hours of discussion with them, with over six screen pages of emails (not including the ones I have deep-sixed or haven't read yet). One of the areas that will surprise you most is, during all the pertinent discussions being undertaken, how often large sidebars commence, seemingly right around every corner. They are omnipresent, to come up with a fancy term. One minute we might be discussing why one alloy may not blank or upset so well (what a vending machine needs for a coin to function) and then all of a sudden we commence a discussion of how die life may be affected — negatively or perhaps be improved for this or that reason. It dawns on you how a seemingly simple task such as changing coining alloy becomes monumentally complicated.

Just a few days ago the Mint called and confided about some trials they desire to embark upon with some experimental die steels and die steel processing. We talked for almost an hour and all the while I kept thinking back to diemaking during the Indian Cent series, and how far the technology has come in the last 100 years.

During the course of the conversation I asked, as it relates to the Mint, where in the pecking order of importance does die life rest? Very important. Is it the main topic of meetings? Not every meeting, but it is a hot topic. Or does it not matter? It does matter. Is die life predictable? No. I guess some things don't change... die life has been a major concern for the Mint in its entire history.



Today's die life for the cent is NOT all that much better than during the coinage of the Indian cents. What has changed, however, is the standard deviation of die life. Standard deviation is the measure of variation in die life. While the die life for production strikes of 1877 Indians was very long — several hundreds of thousands — without question, there were many dies during this series that lasted only a few thousand strikes, and likely some only made it a few hundred strikes. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if some dies lasted literally a few dozen strikes before they had to be retired. In today's world, at the Mint average die life for the cent may be 400,000 strikes per die but most dies make it to 200,000 before being retired.

Keep in mind the main reason for retiring a die is the exact same reason then as it is today... either premature wear, or metal fatigue, or die cracks or cuds. At the Mint, a cud is known as a "piece-out." The only thing that has changed since 1909 are the standards, with today's rejection criteria being far more stringent than in the Indian cent days. Rejection today occurs for a minor, almost microscopic die crack that would have undoubtedly gone unnoticed back in the 1800's. Unlike many metallurgical properties, such as strength, hardness, or ductility, fatigue is the one attribute of a metal part that is at best a guessing game for metallurgists. One die might last 1 million strikes, and the next 100 strikes before it fatigues and forms a die crack or even a full cud.



1869 Snow-1 Early die state



1869 Snow-1 Middle die state



1869 Snow-1 Late die state



This is why some dies are very common and others are extraordinarily rare. For example, have a look at the 1869 Snow-1 variety. This is a great repunched date variety which is rarely encountered. In fact, compared to its more popular and much higher demand Snow-3 counterpart, it is easily ten times as rare. Why?

For me, the answer came in 1992 at the Michigan State Numismatic Convention in Dearborn. There I ran into fellow Fly-In member and variety specialist Dave Brody from Elkhart, Indiana. Dave has long been an ardent student of numismatic varieties, specializing in Shield nickels and Indian cents. He calmly walked up to me in an aisle and showed me a high-grade 1869/18 Snow-1. It was a choice XF+ with great original brown surfaces but had been holed and crudely plugged at 12 o'clock. Nonetheless, as soon as I examined it I asked for a price and got out my checkbook right away.

This particular example had a very pronounced die break along the bottom of the date, as can be readily observed in the photos showing the die progression of this variety. Undoubtedly what transpired with the commencement of this die was premature fatigue cracking near the date. And it progressed quickly to a complete fracture. Being the obverse die, it was positioned in the hammer location and soon after this particular coin was struck, it created a "piece-out" or cud. And as soon as it was discovered by the press operator or inspector, the die was retired forever, well before the average lifespan of an Indian cent die. But before this took place, without question, this die struck some 1869 Snow-1

varieties with a full cud in that location. Now, whether the Mint inspector back in 1869 rounded them all up or some slipped through, we may never know. I, for one, in decades of searching have not discovered this variety with a full cud, but trust me, I would love to.

As it relates to the Indian Cent series, the keys to die life greatly depend on the below input parameters.

1. The quality of the die steel, or its metallurgical properties.
2. The processing or method of manufacture of the die itself.
3. The inherent properties of the blanks or planchets. Planchet properties include how hard the metal blanks are, how well the metal flows during the striking, and so on. Obviously, the early use of copper-nickel greatly deteriorated die life as compared to the bronze issues that followed.

One curious discovery I made during this journey with the Mint is that, for the Shield nickels as well as the copper-nickel coinage and perhaps even the Indian Cents, it appears the coin planchets were not annealed prior to striking, which is very surprising and most likely the leading determinant for poor die life.

4. The design of the coin. For the Indian cent series, this is a constant, since from 1860 through 1909, only the slightest changes in design occurred. For example, even during the recent State quarter series, each state's selected design had an impact on die life.

The Fly-In Club Welcomes Our Newest Members

As an ongoing feature, we'd like to welcome our new members:

Member	State	Sponsor
Darren V	Ohio	none
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Richard A	Texas	Rick Snow
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Thank you for joining us. If you haven't already done so, please check out our web site and online talk forum at

www.fly-inclub.org

If you have any questions or comments about the club, please contact me, Vern Sebbby at PO Box 559, Sandwich, Illinois, 60548, or email, melva6906@indianvalley.com.

Let's start with design, and this is much more critical in the eye of the Mint than most collectors realize. They are constantly analyzing design features, its relief, the spacing and taper of letters and numbers, and so on. The new Lincoln cent with Shield reverse has vexed the Mint with a diminished die life. For the Indian cent, the die with the most consternation was the reverse. In my collection, I have approximately 10 times as many cuds and die breaks on the reverse than obverse. The flow of the copper metal during striking between the wreath (as well as the shield) and the rim created enough stress that these areas were the first to fail. But every series is different, with the Lincoln cent showing issues on the obverse more often.

The planchets. Of course, you can imagine how troubling maintaining die life would be if blanks were as hard as the die itself. So a main attribute of a planchet is softness. But it certainly is not the only characteristic of concern. Obviously, an alloy that is extremely soft will not wear well in commerce, therefore, a planchet has to be receptive to a strike but last 30 years or more as a coin.

Not only is softness important, but flow, work hardening and other variables come into play. Two different alloys may have similar hardness but their "flow" may be entirely different. Flow is critical in filling the die up fully and metals have their own unique flow properties. The Mint spends an immense amount of effort not only in coinage design but also the manufacturing of the blanks. As we speak, they are trialing some "out-of-the-box" initiatives to enhance all coining metals strikeability.

As mentioned, one interesting item of discovery during this process which no doubt had a substantial impact on die life is that the blanks used for Shield nickels as well as Indian cents were likely not annealed prior to striking. Annealing undoubtedly occurred at some point along the processing line, but in measuring actual hardnesses of off-centered Indian cents from my collection as well as an off-centered Shield nickel Ken Hill provided me, the values fall in line with what is expected of a cold-worked or cold-rolled planchets. Almost every metal hardens during deformation in a phenomenon known as strain-hardening or "work-hardening." The sheet used to produce coining blanks is cold-rolled to gauge, or thickness, before being blanked for planchets. In some cases where an extremely ductile metal is being employed for coinage, the blanking is done in the cold-rolled

condition to facilitate producing a clean blank with no cupping or crowning. The issue is it becomes problematic to anneal after blanking as the pieces are very small and must be cleaned after annealing to de-scale any oxide films that form during the high temperature anneal.

Even though the composition of the Shield nickel and today's Jefferson nickel are identical, the hardness measured on blank areas show distinct differences.

The data suggests that, during the production of Shield nickels and Indian cents, the Mint merely struck the blanks as-rolled at very high hardnesses, considerably higher than their counterparts in today's Jefferson nickels or Lincoln cents prior to 1982 that were annealed prior to striking. This no doubt helps account for the very low die life seen during the Shield Nickel and Indian Cent copper-nickel run.

Die manufacturing. This is the area where perhaps the greatest strides have been made. Without question, die manufacturing during the Indian cent series was a black art compared to today's technology. We'll get to metallurgy below, but to me, the biggest issue with Indian cent dies for the Mint was the wide variation in the heat treatment.

Today, the Mint heat treats the dies in a vacuum to preserve the qualities of the surface and near-surface metal. But no such technology was available back then. The issue with heat treating in atmosphere, even protected with charcoal or CO2 atmosphere, is the risk of oxygen interacting with the steel at very high temperatures. The result is a depletion of carbon from the surface of the die. Carbon is the element that is needed for very high hardnesses to promote long die life. If the level of carbon becomes too low because of an improper heat treatment, the images become very soft and mushy. In my opinion, this was a major issue in years like 1882, 1883, 1886 Type II, 1887 and 1888, where one often sees mint state examples with a very mushy, almost caved-in look. A lot of copper-nickel issues also take on this look but undoubtedly this is exacerbated by the hard planchets being struck.

Die Metallurgy. Next issue, we will explore the tremendous advances made in the metallurgy of die steel production.

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“Hoosier Flyer Collection”
~ One Cent Patterns and Flying Eagle Cents ~
By Stuart A. Fabe

It almost goes without saying that building a collection of coins, or anything for that matter, is a highly personal enterprise. And similarly, the direction in which a collection progresses is often something that takes on a life of its own. Four years ago, I never would have imagined embarking on a plan, or even given myself permission to spend the resources, to show the transition in US coinage from the large copper cent to the small cent in the 1850s. However, once I began reading the literature written by coin luminaries such as Q. David Bowers and Richard Snow, and yes, articles presented in “Longacre’s Ledger,” I frankly became consumed with wanting to build a unique, well-defined collection.

First, I think it is important to stress a few points. It was never my desire to own the very best coins. It would have been far too costly, and it’s superfluous. Instead, I wanted to have a very streamlined collection; one that contained excellent examples of pattern cents and important varieties of Flying Eagles. As much as anything, I wanted my collection to “tell a story,” and hopefully I have achieved that goal with the 41 coins in my collection.

I met Rick Snow at the Central States show in Chicago in 2009, and he gave me some sage advice: “collect Flying Eagle cents.” He told me that there are 50 years’ worth of Indian Heads (a lot of coins), but there are more than enough interesting varieties of Flying Eagles spanning 1856 – 1858 to hold my attention. It made a lot of sense to me. So, I purchased Rick’s attribution guide (*2nd edition, Vol. 1*), and then a few other books, and I was on my way. At that same show, I purchased 1854 and 1855 pattern cents with the large eagle on the obverse and quickly discovered that patterns were some of the most fascinating coins ever conceived. So, now my collecting interest could follow two related paths, patterns cents and Flying Eagles, and if you’re a collector like me, it helps to switch direction from time to time in order to keep your interest fresh.

So, I quickly learned about the storied history involved in America finally giving up the large copper cents that had been around since 1793. Dr. Lewis Feuchtwanger deserved a great amount of credit in attempting to get the US Congress to go to a smaller sized planchet with a composition other than copper. His 1837 German silver composition with the fierce looking eagle was prophetic of things to come, but the future US Mint’s melter and refiner, Dr. James C. Booth, just didn’t feel that Feuchtwanger’s composition was suitable for mintage. He was probably correct, and it would be another 19 years before the Flying Eagle pattern was adopted. As a collector, I was fascinated by Dr. Feuchtwanger’s perspicacity; so the story of my collection starts with an MS65 specimen.

Then, upon studying David Bowers’ *Buyer’s and Enthusiast’s Guide to Flying Eagle and Indian Heads* and immersing myself in Dr. Judd’s 10th edition of *United States Pattern Coins* (plus Rick Snow’s guide book), I began to learn about the fascinating parade of attempts by the US Mint to produce a suitable small cent.

The “annular” cents with perforations and punched out holes in the center were so unusual that I had to own a few originals and re-strikes from 1850 and 1851. It was at this point that I became familiar with the term “billon” and how silver was used to raise the perforated coin’s value to one cent. The undated annular cent was an immediate giveaway to its vintage as 1851. Collectors are, no doubt, aware that no pattern cents were struck in 1852.



Undated (1851) ring cent. Billon. MS-65 PCGS
Shown with actual die alignment

In 1853, the Mint switched its design to the one used for the 1853 quarter eagle. This was not meant to be a very imaginative design approach, and curiously, the Mint’s new Melter and Refiner, James Booth, attempted to use a German silver alloy mix similar to Dr. Feuchtwanger’s composition in 1837. My 1853 Pattern cent, Judd-151, is composed of 40% nickel and 60% copper.

The years 1854 and 1855 were landmarks for the cent. Relying on Christian Gobrecht’s flying eagle design from the 1838 half dollar, these patterns are some of the most impressive coins ever produced (one guy’s opinion)! I fell in love with these coins, and at one point considered specializing in the 1854 and 1855 dates before deciding there was a broader story to tell. I never met Rick Kay, but I certainly respect his admiration of these intriguing patterns.

In 1854, other patterns were struck to test alloy composition, design and planchet size. The J-158 was struck from a die created by reducing the design of an 1854 silver dollar. Curiously, the crossbar of the 4 in the date was not evident, thus rendering an appearance as “1851.” The J-160, made of copper and smaller in size than the currently circulating cents, had the Head of Liberty and a coronet. Various alloys were tested as well.

Then, of course, the date 1856 issued forth the design of the Flying Eagle pattern cent that would become legendary. I’ll never forget being a youngster in the 1950s with my very modest green folder of coins, and the space for the 1856 wasn’t even punched out. It just said “Rare,” and I thought that only kings and really rich people would ever be able to own one. It was just that magical! So, when I got older, I finally gave myself permission to purchase a PR65, and I’m glad I did. (I’m still not a king or a really rich person, but my dogs think I’m pretty special

around feeding time).

Collecting coins from 1857 brought about an entirely new set of goals. Premier among those goals was finding an outstanding example of the J-186 pattern cent with the head of Liberty. This was indeed a challenge because as the Judd book pointed out there were only 4-6 struck (R7); so when I found an MS65 in an old green PCGS holder, I leaped on it. To this day, I think it is the rarest coin I own and certainly far rarer than the legendary 1856 Flying Eagle.

Naturally, I acquired the S-1 and S-2 varieties of the 1857 Obverse of 1856. They're both great coins, and I appreciate how they show the Flying Eagle's subtle transition.

The 1857 multi-denominational die clashes fascinated me, and this sentiment was reinforced by David Bowers' comments about them being among the most interesting of American coins. So, I embarked on collecting the Snow-7, Snow-8 and Snow-9 with clash marks from the 1857 gold Double Eagle, the reverse of a quarter and the obverse of the half dollar. Now, my collection was starting to take shape, and I was beginning to understand the nuances of Flying Eagle varieties.

The year 1858 was a veritable numismatic treasure trove. I continued to study the literature and review auction records, and then I began my campaign to own the 1858 12-piece pattern set and key Flying Eagle varieties. I should admit that at various points along the way I questioned my sanity in pursuing these coins and the amount of money I was spending to acquire respectable examples. Then, of course like a true out-of-control zealot, I lunged forward with the unbridled enthusiasm that only collectors understand. All the while, folks like Rick Snow must've giggled uncontrollably each time I called.

I'll never forget Rick's office manager, Karin, saying "we like you!". I knew I was sunk!

The beauty of the 1858 12-piece pattern set was that it gave me an opportunity to further understand the transition in US coinage from the Flying Eagle to the Indian Head cent, and to own several nice Indian Heads without owning their entire 50-year history. I also smiled to myself knowing that, here in the early years of the 21st century, I was collecting coins that the US Mint had produced to help entice collectors in the mid 19th century. That's staying power!



1858 Indian Head / Ornamental shield J-212, PR-65 Cameo

Then, I acquired the 1858 J-198 and J-199, with the J-199 being especially intriguing due to its fascinating broad planchet. Rick Snow told me that this coin had come from King Farouk's collection and was well known by the scratches where

his Royal Highness had tried to remove a couple of spots. If only the King had left things alone, this coin would be even more valuable. As it is, I love the coin because it is beautifully struck and quite special with its broad planchet.



1858 Flying Eagle / Ornamental Shield. Broad planchet

Of course, I focused my attention on proof and mint state issues of the Large Letter and Small Letter versions of 1858 and key varieties such as the 1858/7. Given the Flying Eagle cent's high relief, and its inherent propensity for wearing out dies, this mythic coin was doomed to a two-year existence. To its credit, the Mint tried to extend its run by changing the 1858 design from the Large Letters version with its High Leaves reverse to the Small Letters version with the Low Leaves reverse, but alas, the more durable Indian Head cent was waiting in the wings. I am proud to also have an early die state version of the 1858/7 S-1, and the even rarer yet less well known, 1858/7 S-7. The story of my collection ends with a final pattern, the 1859 J-228, the famous transitional issue.

And so I came to a point with my Hoosier Flyer Collection where I had to decide if and how I wanted to proceed. I have loved building this collection like very few things I have ever known. I know there have been far greater collections than mine, but I have been pleased to learn so much of our American history along the way, and to have met many fine and knowledgeable collectors and dealers.

Yes, I have been very fortunate indeed, but it's time to move on, and I have decided that now it is time to let these little "medallions" go to other "stewards." And so, I have consigned my collection to Stack's Bowers Galleries for auction at their Rarities Night event at the ANA's World's Fair of Money in Philadelphia this coming August. Dave Bowers has offered to personally catalogue my collection for the event, and I am indeed honored. I plan to attend, and if you come, please say hello and maybe share a story or two. After all, it's what we collectors do!

Editor's note:
Stu Fabe's fabulous collection is highlighted on a video
by Rick Snow on
www.youtube.com.
Search "History of the Small Cent" on that site or scan the QR code to watch.



“The Hoosier Flyer Collection”
(One-Cent Patterns & Flying Eagles)

Denomination	Rarity	Grade	Certification	Certification #
1837 Feuchtwanger token		MS65	NGC	1816085-019
1850 Large Cent		MS65BN	PCGS CAC	06620793
1850 J-119	R L6	PR63	PCGS CAC EEPS	11922572
1850 J-124	R L7 RES	PR64	PCGS CAC	4854320
1851 J-127	R L6	MS65	PCGS CAC EEPS	3079048
1853 J-151	R L6	PR62	PCGS	16580684
1854 J-158	R H6	PR64	PCGS	14160234
1854 J-160	R 4	PR65BN	PCGS	19383378
1854 J-164	R 5	PF64BN (Original)	PCGS	20668838
1855 J-172	R L6	PF64BN	NGC EEPS	3046364-010
1856 J-180 S-9		PR65	PCGS EEPS	22048059
1857 J-186	R H7	PR65	PCGS	3209773
1857 Obv. of 1856	S-1	MS64	PCGS EEPS	16861751
1857 Obv. of 1856	S-2	MS65	PCGS EEPS	12246012
1857		MS65	PCGS	06636959
1857 \$20 Obv. Clash S-7		XF45	PCGS	20569331
1857 25c. Rev. Clash S-8		MS64	PCGS EEPS	22076827
1857 50c. Obv. Clash S-9		MS63	PCGS EEPS	16339530
1857		PR63	PCGS EEPS	21523698
1858 J-191*	R 5	PR64	PCGS EEPS	08823772
1858 J-192*	R 5	PR64	PCGS	10884778
1858 J-193*	R 5	PR65	PCGS CAC	11387437
1858 J-198	R L6	PR64	PCGS EEPS	50088784
1858 J-199	R H7 (Farouk)	PR (Genuine)	PCGS	06668343
1858 J-202*	R 5	PR64	PCGS EEPS	4568389
1858 J-203*	R 5	PR65	PCGS CAC	07342935
1858 J-204*	R 5	PR63	PCGS	19383381
1858 J-206*	R 5	PR63+	PCGS	20569333
1858 J-208*	R 1	PR64	PCGS	21144553
1858 J-211*	R 4	PR65	PCGS EEPS	12805002
1858 J-212*	R 4	PR64CAM	PCGS EEPS	12759700
1858 J-213*	R 5	PR63	PCGS	20569332
1858 LL (High Leaves)		MS65+	PCGS EEPS	06611552
1858 LL S-17 (Low Leaves)		MS64	PCGS EEPS	14088017
1858 LL		PR65	PCGS EEPS	8341950
1858/7 LL S-1 (EDS)		MS64	PCGS EEPS	06611551
1858/7 LL S-7		MS63	NGC EEPS	2171016
1858 SL(Low Leaves)		MS65	PCGS CAC	5441829
1858 SL(High Leaves)		MS64	PCGS	20332362
1858 SL*(Low Leaves)		PR63	PCGS EEPS CAC	06698269
1859 J-228 (Chiro)	R 1	MS65	PCGS EEPS	10975572

* 1858 12-Piece Pattern Set

The 1907 Snow-27 Story

Tony Bohle

When I bought a 1907 Snow-27 a while back off an eBay auction, the seller turned out to be one of our Fly-In-Club members, I was very excited to get the this coin for my PCGS registry set. The coin was raw but attributed as the Snow-27 variety by the seller, When the coin arrived it looked awesome and was spot on with the Snow-27 attribution using Rick Snow's reference material.

So off the coin went to PCGS for grading and attribution. About six weeks later I got the coin back and was very surprised when it did not get the Snow-27 attribution I was hoping for.

I then sent an email to Mike Faraone who is the chief attributer over at PCGS, he informed me that the coin I sent did not match the pictures of the Snow-27 variety in the Cherry Pickers Guide. He suggested that I contact Rick Snow for his advice on this.

I contacted Rick and he informed me that the pictures in the Cherry Pickers Guide were wrong and he would correct the problem, Rick contacted Bill Fivaz, co-author of the guide, and Dennis Tucker, the publisher at Whitman. They were both concerned about errors in the book and made notes to fix the mix-up in future editions. They then contacted Mike Farone at PCGS about the problem.

Within one day, I was contacted by PCGS telling me to return the coin and they would re-holder the coin with the Snow-27 attribution, I now have the coin back from PCGS in the well deserved Snow-27 attribution holder.

I was also contacted by Bill Fivaz of the *Cherrypickers Guide* with there apologies and they also made up all my extra expensed in the matter.

As this entire ordeal took some time to correct, it was well worth the wait as this is the only 1907 Snow-27 PCGS has ever attributed to date.

Thanks Rick Snow, Bill Fivaz, Dennis Tucker and Mike Farone for all your help.



1907 Snow-20



1907 Snow-27, FS-303

Editor's note: PCGS has decided to list both the Snow-20 and the Snow-27 under the FS-303 attribution. Tony's submission was the first coin so labeled, so it is an unusual step that in my opinion makes more confusion than it attempts to solve.

***“The ANA 2011 Summer Seminar
Detection of Counterfeit and Altered Coins”***

Jeff Burke



Introduction

I was the fortunate recipient of a Prue and Arthur Fitts scholarship to return to the ANA Summer Seminar in Colorado Springs, June 25 to July 1, 2011. Here are some highlights of my experiences, drawn from my daily journal accounts, including the five-day course on “Detection of Counterfeit and Altered Coins,” meal conversations with David Lange, numismatic author and Director of Research at NGC, the Fly-In Club’s

Counterfeit Library of Indian Head cents that Rick Snow brought to show our class, and a wonderful roundtable discussion with YNs and senior numismatists.

June 26, 2011

We had our first class session of “Detection of Counterfeit and Altered Coins” this afternoon. Our instructors are Brian Silliman, Grader at NGC, and Ira Goldberg of Superior Galleries in Beverly Hills, CA. Brian told us that he has taught a hundred seminar classes and has had approximately 1,500 students! Our textbook is “Detecting Counterfeit and Altered U.S. Coins” -- also used as a correspondence course text for the ANA Numismatic Scholar Diploma Program which I completed in 2009.

According to Brian, counterfeit and altered coins make up only a fraction of one percent of coins on the market. Despite their relative scarcity, such coins still deceive many new and experienced collectors. Our class of 23 will spend five days learning about all types of coin deceptions. Today Brian showed us PowerPoint slides on the diagnostics of key-date and semi-key-date coins.

I attended a new Summer Seminar program tonight: a “Numismatics Roundtable” discussion held at the Slocum Commons room on the Colorado College campus. A number of YNs brought coins to show older collectors and seek their advice. The process started slowly, but soon you could hear animated discussions coming from all over the room! It was pure joy for me to watch numismatic experts such as Ira Goldberg and Michael Fey (one of the top experts on Morgan dollars) look at the coins and offer wisdom and encouragement to these younger collectors. Ira handed around a beautiful Roman aureus (gold) coin (worth \$10,000) in a flip that was a sight to behold! When I asked Ira how he got his start in coin collecting, he told us about working as a teenager in his father’s Los Angeles store, where he was in charge of sweeping the floors and sometimes helped buy coins. I also had fun listening to Rick Sear, columnist for *The Numismatist*, and David Sklow, owner of Fine Numismatic Books, trade ANA lore.

June 27, 2011

This morning I had breakfast with David Lange, who told me he had worked at an engineering company for 15 years before being hired at NGC. Lange’s books have taught me a lot, so it was quite a thrill to share this and other meal conversations with him during the week! David regrets having sold his high grade sets of Indian Head cents, Lincoln cents, Buffalo nickels, Mercury dimes and Walking Liberty half dollars that he had put together earlier in his career. He said it would be too expensive to replace them now! Instead, he has assembled circulated coins from these series to have a coin collection similar to the one that he had in childhood.

In today’s class, Brian covered the manufacture and marketing of counterfeit coins being produced in China. After lunch, we started to explore the ANA collection of about 400 counterfeit and altered coins. We began to analyze these coins at our tables - every type of coin from Colonials to Double Eagles! Each team (2 or 3 people) would send a person up to the instructor’s desk and bring back a small Intercept Shield box of 10 to 25 coins, usually in one type of denomination such as Shield, Liberty and Buffalo Nickels. Each coin was in a plastic flip with a paper description of the coin inside the flip. Brian encouraged us to examine the entire coin first before picking up a magnifying glass. Each of us studied the individual coins to determine if they were altered, counterfeit or genuine. Once we recorded our assessment of a piece, we would look at the paper description inside the flip to find the correct answer. I didn’t fare so well on my first afternoon of examining coins!

June 28, 2011

During the afternoon break I talked with John Danner, Summer Seminar Roving Instructor, about his thoughts on the correct mintage of the 1877 Indian Head cent. John said that he has been working with David Bowers to try to gain access to a U.S. Philadelphia Mint ledger that apparently has a complete record of die strikes for all types of coins struck at the mint. They are working with politicians to get permission to see certain documents. John is hopeful that such a mint record may reveal the true mintage of the 1877 Indian Head cent. Rick Snow addresses this question in his Red Book editions on Flying Eagle and Indian Head cents, along with articles about the 1877 Indian Head cent in previous issues of Longacre’s Ledger.

June 29, 2011

Our instructors gave us a fun exercise in class this morning. They selected 30 coins and passed them around the class for a contest to see which team could do the best at determining which coins were genuine, altered or counterfeit. My team ended up identifying 26 out of 30 pieces correctly!

I had a relaxing dinner tonight with Jerry Bobbe and David Lange, who told me his favorite U.S. coin series are Buffalo nickels and Walking Liberty half dollars. We also discussed the mystery of the correct mintage of the 1877 Indian Head cent! Lange first came to the Seminar as a YN in 1983 and has been a columnist for *The Numismatist* since 1988.

June 30, 2011

I had an enjoyable breakfast with Mitch Ernst, President of the Nebraska Numismatic Association, and Brian Silliman, our instructor. I had the chance to join long-time Summer Seminar participants David Goya and Sonny Henry in a conversation with Rick Snow before Rick came to our class as a guest speaker. Of all the books I've read on coin collecting over the years, Rick Snow's Red Book Guide to Flying Eagle and Indian Head Cents remains my favorite book of all!

The last day of class was the week's highlight for me! Brian introduced Rick Snow as the top Flying Eagle and Indian Head cent expert in the country. Rick brought the Fly-In Club's Counterfeit Library collection of Indian Head cents to share with our class. Brian pointed out that some of Fly-In Club's specimens were better than those in the ANA counterfeit coin collection! Snow said that even he (and the major grading services) initially had been fooled by several coins in this collection. Rick told our class it is important to know how to identify authentic Indian cents so that you can compare these diagnostics to counterfeit or altered date specimens.

Indian Head cents are my favorite coins so it was quite exciting (and a bit unnerving) to see some of the Fly-In Club's Counterfeit Library collection of Indian cents that certainly would have tricked me as well. Rick passed around Indian Head cents in flips for all to see. There were numerous false examples of key dates such as the 1864-L, 1877 and 1909-S. He had samples of spark erosion, transfer dies, altered dates, Chinese counterfeits, added mint marks, false-die counterfeits, chased mint marks, electro-deposits; a plethora of coins for us to study and take note of! Snow also brought a few other counterfeit coins to show us, including Lincoln cents, large cents, and Barber half dollars, among other specimens. What a set of counterfeit and altered coins! Rick mentioned that people can donate counterfeits to the Fly-In Club. We were grateful to Rick for taking the time to come to our class and help us learn about these deceptive pieces.

It has been quite a week! The class has been an invaluable source of hands-on experience with learning how to identify a wide range of coin deceptions. Now I have more confidence in identifying altered or counterfeit problem coins. I also have greater appreciation and respect for third-party professional graders who do this work on a daily basis.

ANA SUMMER SEMINAR 2012

COURSES AT A GLANCE

SESSION 1 - JUNE 23-29

Saturday, June 23, is Registration Day

(NOTE: YN's arrive Friday, June 22)

Friday, June 29, is Departure Day

Classroom Hours: Sunday, June 24, 1-4 PM

Monday-Thursday, June 25-28, 9-11:45 AM & 1:15-4 PM

SELECT ONE CLASS PER WEEK

1. Grading United States Coins, Part 1 (*see description, page 4*)
2. Grading United States Coins, Part 1 (*p. 4*)
3. Grading United States Coins, Part 2 (*p. 4*)
4. Detection of Counterfeit and Altered Coins (*p. 4*)
5. Think Like A Thief: Security for Dealers and Collectors (*p. 5*)
6. Detecting Counterfeit World Paper Money (*p. 5*)
7. Collecting United States Type Coins (*p. 5*)
8. Collecting Ancient Coins (*p. 5*)
9. Introduction to Numismatic Digital Photography (*p. 5*)
10. The Complete Numismatist (*p. 6*)
11. The Modern Minting Process: Errors and Varieties (*p. 6*)
12. Colonial Americana: An Exploration beyond the Coins (*p. 6*)
13. Early American Copper Coinage I & II (*p. 6*)
14. Non-Federal Paper Money of America (1783-1865) (*p. 6*)
15. Women in Power and Other Feisty Females on Coinage and in Art (*p. 7*)
16. The Fascinating Field of So-Called Dollars (*p. 7*)

SESSION 2 - JUNE 30-JULY 6

Saturday, June 30, is Registration Day

(NOTE: YN's arrive Friday, June 29)

Friday, July 6 is Departure Day

Classroom Hours: Sunday, July 1, 1-4 PM

Monday-Thursday, July 2-5, 9-11:45 AM & 1:15-4 PM

SELECT ONE CLASS PER WEEK

20. Grading United States Coins, Part 1 (*p. 10*)
21. Grading United States Coins, Part 1 (*p. 10*)
22. Grading United States Coins, Part 2 (*p. 10*)
23. Advanced United States Coin Grading and Problem Coins (*p. 10*)
24. Detection of Counterfeit and Altered Coins (*p. 11*)
25. Advanced Numismatic Digital Photography (*p. 11*)
26. National Bank Notes: Bringing History to Life (*p. 11*)
27. The Coinage of Charles Barber (*p. 11*)
28. Flying Eagle and Indian Head Cents (*p. 11*)
29. Finances of the American Civil Wars (*p. 11*)
30. Early U.S. Commemorative Coins (1892-1954) (*p. 12*)
31. Creating a Winning Numismatic Exhibit (*p. 12*)
32. Coin Carving 101: Creating the Modern Hobo Nickel (*p. 12*)
33. Mexico from Juárez to the Revolución (1861-1921) (*p. 12*)
34. Military Numismatics Since 1930 (*p. 12*)
35. Advanced Military Numismatics (*p. 12*)

***Which Indian Cents are Really Rare
(Part Two – 1990 to 2011 Comparison)***

by Vernon Sebby, Fly-In #474

As a continuation of the analysis presented in the August 2011 issue, I did the same number crunch for June/July 1990. I multiplied the July 1990 greysheet bid for MS-65 Indians by the June 1990 PCGS population report (using red brown numbers for the bronze issues), to determine a value rating in 1990. I then put the 1990 value rating along side this years' rating. I listed the population numbers, but left out the other detail to keep the table from being overwhelming. As follows is the comparison:

2011 Value Rating	Date	1990 Value Rating	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 1990	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 2011	2011 Value Rating	Date	1990 Value Rating	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 1990	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 2011
1 (best)	1896	9	8	19	30	1885	21	12	59
2	1893	7	6	15	31	1865	40	22	88
3	1895	2	2	28	32	1874	43	25	85
4	1897	11	12	30	33	1876	37	15	62
5	1890	4	4	20	34	1875	28	13	78
6	1892	5	4	20	35	1886 T1	12	6	56
7	1894	13	5	23	36	1908-S	45	35	93
8	1905	16	17	55	37	1878	30	12	74
9	1898	10	11	45	38	1870	34	12	53
10	1889	3	3	23	39	1864 BR	50	67	187
11	1887	6	6	24	40	1867	23	9	51
12	1891	8	7	23	41	1868	39	17	92
13	1903	20	28	65	42	1866	38	17	63
14	1904	25	33	67	43	1873	33	15	81
15	1900	19	27	69	44	1871	17	5	54
16	1888	1 (best)	1	16	45	1864 L	44	14	71
17	1902	22	30	84	46	1863	51	30	145
18	1901	27	37	92	47	1864 CN	48	14	94
19	1908	31	44	94	48	1869	47	20	96
20	1907	32	46	106	49	1861	53	40	161
21	1883	15	11	52	50	1860	55	56	187
22	1906	29	42	109	51	1862	54	65	196
23	1899	35	51	112	52	1909-S	49	33	113
24	1880	14	11	49	53	1872	36	10	71
25	1881	18	16	66	54	1859	56	24	126
26	1882	26	24	69	55	1877	52	12	53
27	1909	42	56	146	56	1857	58 (worst)	50	193
28	1879	41	28	65	57	1856	46	1	14
29	1884	24	14	68	58 (worst)	1858	57	47	214

Many interesting tidbits can be found in this table. Dates that were under-valued in 1990 continue to be so today, and all the key dates appear to be the worst values, then as now. Keep in mind what I stated in my previous article about demand in determining price. More people want 1856's and 1877's, so that drives up the prices. Dates like the 1871 and 1886 (Type 1) fell in the ratings, as their populations increased without a proportionate decrease in their price.

One more bit of information analysis may give more insight into which Indians are really rare. I sorted my information to examine the population increase from 1990 to 2011. As follows is the data:

	Date	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 1990	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 2011	PCGS Pop. Population Increase		Date	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 1990	PCGS Pop. MS-65 RB June 2011	PCGS Pop. Population Increase
1 (fewest)	1893	6	15	9	30	1886	6	56	50
2	1896	8	19	11	31	1908	44	94	50
3	1856	1	14	13	32	1884	14	68	54
4	1888	1	16	15	33	1902	30	84	54
5	1890	4	20	16	34	1901	37	92	55
6	1891	7	23	16	35	1864 L	14	71	57
7	1892	4	20	16	36	1908-S	35	93	58
8	1887	6	24	18	37	1874	25	85	60
9	1894	5	23	18	38	1907	46	106	60
10	1897	12	30	18	39	1872	10	71	61
11	1889	3	23	20	40	1899	51	112	61
12	1895	2	28	26	41	1878	12	74	62
13	1898	11	45	34	42	1875	13	78	65
14	1904	33	67	34	43	1865	22	88	66
15	1879	28	65	37	44	1873	15	81	66
16	1903	28	65	37	45	1906	42	109	67
17	1880	11	49	38	46	1868	17	92	75
18	1905	17	55	38	47	1869	20	96	76
19	1870	12	53	41	48	1864 CN	14	94	80
20	1877	12	53	41	49	1909-S	33	113	80
21	1883	11	52	41	50	1909	56	146	90
22	1867	9	51	42	51	1859	24	126	102
23	1900	27	69	42	52	1863	30	145	115
24	1882	24	69	45	53	1864 BR	67	187	120
25	1866	17	63	46	54	1861	40	161	121
26	1876	15	62	47	55	1860	56	187	131
27	1885	12	59	47	56	1862	65	196	131
28	1871	5	54	49	57	1857	50	193	143
29	1881	16	66	50	58 (most)	1858	47	214	167

I find it amazing that as the certification of coins has become fully accepted and commonplace in the numismatic community, that only nine 1893's have been added to the ranks in 21 years. From what I see in the marketplace, I'd be surprised if the population increased more than 9 in the next 21 years. Once again, I'd say the years 1887 through 1898 in MS-65 RB, are truly rare.

Fly-In Talk Forum
By Dave Noble

I thought I'd take a few minutes to write a little about our talk site. The Fly-In Club forum. The forum is an excellent way of communicating with both club officers, and group members, we also have the advantage of reading frequent posts by our Editor, Rick Snow. His posts typically convey lots of information and updates to the Snow attribution guide. We can learn much from each other, and the forum is a great way to share our information and ask questions of those who are knowledgeable in both the Flying Eagle and Indian Head Cent series. We have had a few discussions concerning the amount of participation on the forum as some think we lack the constant back and forth conversations you might see on other talk sites.

The Fly-In forum is a club specific and series specific type forum, unlike most other forums that discuss many different type and denominations of coins and currency. This in itself may limit the number of participants and volume of subjects discussed. We do in fact seem to have a lot of silent members who prefe simply to read and enjoy the information found on the forum, but may not be comfortable participating in the discussions themselves.

I am working hard on getting our member's variety census pages updated and posted on our website fly-inclub.org. If you haven't seen it yet, please take the time to visit the site www.fly-inclub.org and click on the "Links" tab, then the "Member's Variety" tab. The member's census gives us an idea of quantity and quality of the varieties owned by our own members, you can get a rough idea of how hard some of these varieties are to

find. If you read the posts, you can definitely see the pride some of the members have in their collections and their abilities to find and secure such rare and valuable pieces. I certainly urge all members to join us on the talk forum. As always, if you need any help or forum information, please feel free to email me any time at tdnoble@sbcglobal.net. Getting started is easy, simply go to the forum site www.fly-inclub.org/talk and hit the "Register" tab, once you have filled out the information and have submitted it, I can get you approved and participating on the site in no time.

We have had a few problems as of late and are working on getting them fixed. We seem to have a multitude of spammers attacking the site daily, this is a constant battle that keeps me pretty busy most of the time. I have received information concerning an upgrade to the forum, but I'm a little reluctant to jump into it until I fully understand the new system. I don't want to take a chance of any down time, so please bear with me on this, I will get it upgraded as soon as possible.

Hope to see more of you there in the future; it is a great way to keep in touch with others that share some of the same collecting interest you have. You also have the chance to show off our newest acquisitions. It's always fun to share your finds with those that can appreciate them.

Look forward to seeing you soon!





Fly-in Club

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Sticky: Members Census info is up on our site. [Goto page: 1 ... 4, 5, 6]	81	admin	2431	Sat Mar 03, 2012 11:02 am scottkrez ➔
Sticky: Club Librarian	12	salembene	217	Mon Jul 25, 2011 1:42 pm admin ➔
➔ 1888 Snow Number?	2	scottkrez	13	Mon Mar 12, 2012 1:09 pm Ranger Rich ➔
➔ 1865 Plain S Snow-3 MS-64RB (PS)	8	scottkrez	55	Mon Mar 12, 2012 6:49 am scottkrez ➔
1855 Flying Eagle?	3	mackwork	27	Mon Mar 12, 2012 6:46 am EagleEye ➔
Another 1907 - S1 or S23 ???	9	mackwork	62	Mon Mar 12, 2012 6:37 am EagleEye ➔

Shallow N Reverse Counterfeits

By Richard Snow

A group of highly deceptive fakes with the Shallow N reverse continue to show up in the marketplace. Earlier, in the December 2010 *Longacre's Ledger*, I detailed some of these, including dates that include 1876 and 1871. Recently another date, 1872 (Obv. 3, found on Snow-1), can be added to the list of known dates with a Shallow N reverse. When will a fake 1877 from these reverse dies show up? I'm sure they are out there. It's just a matter of finding them.

So far, three different fake Shallow N reverse dies have been identified. The first one was found on an 1876 Indian cent, a date not known to exist with a Shallow N reverse. Although it was believed with 100% certainty to be fake when it was first discovered, it took 9 years to find a duplicate from these dies, mak-

ing it possible to match their repeating die characteristics. Small hits on the original coin that transferred the image to the fake die had small imperfections that also transferred. In this case, a small depression by the central olive leaf was the identifying mark. The duplicate fake example 1876 Shallow N was found in a PCGS holder graded AU-58 in 2010.

The next two shallow N dies found were linked by a common obverse die dated 1871. These had a repeating defect on the neck of Lady Liberty. One of these was also detailed in the December 2010 *Longacre's Ledger*. The second was found shortly afterwards in an NGC holder. These two 1871 fakes had different reverse dies, which now brought us one more counterfeit Shallow N die to record.



Two 1871 Shallow N counterfeits with different reverse dies - note the mark on the neck.





***Shallow N Counterfeit Reverse -
note depression by olive leaf
Dates known: 1876***

Both these 1871 fake reverse dies are very well made and, to identify them as counterfeits, they must be recorded and watched out for, since typical counterfeit identifiers are lacking. Once you see one, you may learn what to look for but until you know, you would be fooled.

The identifying characteristic of these dies are die cracks that formed on the counterfeit die. It is entirely possible that they exist without these die cracks as well, so this is not a foolproof identifying marker. On the other hand, if a suspected coin has them, then you can be sure it is fake. This is important to note because all non-Proof 1877's, some 1870-1872 and all 1864-1869 Indian cents have the Shallow N reverse. All genuine Shallow N die pairs for 1871, 1872 and 1877 have been identified and listed in the *Flying Eagle and Indian Cent Attribution Guide*. So careful comparison of those dates is possible. The 1864-1870 dates are not so complete a list. Any obverse die could be used with these reverses, so you should keep an eye out for any date with these reverse dies.



***Shallow N Counterfeit Reverse -
note die crack from E to rim
Dates known: 1871, 1872***



***Shallow N Counterfeit Reverse -
note die crack through arrowheads
Dates known: 1871***

Recently I purchased a collection that had a 1872 certified by PCGS and graded XF45. The coin has the same die crack as the first 1871 (E to the rim at 1:30). The obverse die is Obv. 3 which is found on Snow-1, but with a Bold N reverse. Obv. 3 shows repunching on the 2 (n). The coin had a dark slate color, which should have kicked it out of the grading process. It was artificially circulated and recolored. The numerous marks make finding repeating depressions very difficult.

Keep in mind that so far as is known, all genuine 1872 Snow-1's have a Bold N reverse. It is entirely possible that a genuine coin with Obv. 3 and a Shallow N reverse could exist.

To properly identify the repeating markers to find more 1872 Obv. 3 fakes, I need your help. I need to find a second fake example with this obverse die. Only by comparing two examples from the same die can we record the distinguishing repeating marker. If you find one, please let me know.



1872 Obv. 3/Shallow N Counterfeit in PCGS holder



1872 Obv. 3 / Shallow N Counterfeit



1872 Obv. 3 Counterfeit Obverse



***Shallow N Counterfeit Reverse -
note die crack from E to rim
Dates known: 1871, 1872***

Off-Center Clash Marks By Richard Snow

One of the unsolved mysteries of variety collecting is the weird off-center clash marks. These enigmatic markings have defied explanation since their discovery. The first example described was the 1880 Snow-1. It's appearance was in Bill Fivaz's and J.T. Stanton's error and variety pricelist, *Joja Jemz* (Vol. 1, No. 2, March 1988). However, I don't know of any reference before my *Flying Eagle and Indian Cents*, published in 1991, that described the 1880 Snow-1, but then only because it had a very minor doubled die obverse.

Doubled dies became the darling of the collecting public in the 1980's through the pioneering *Encyclopedia of Doubled Dies* by John Wexler. Repunched dates became mainstream with Breen's *Complete Encyclopedia of United States and Colonial Coins* (1987). Misplaced digits were highlighted by Kevin Flynn in his dual-titled 1997 work: *A Collectors Guide to Misplaced Dates* (on the spine) and *Two Dates are Better than One* (on the cover). The multi-denominational clashed dies were first properly described by Dave Bowers in his 1996 book: *Enthusiasts Guide to Flying Eagle and Indian Cents*. Nowhere were off-center clash marks addressed as a collectable variety.

The first attempt at describing how these occurred came from Tom DeLorey, who submitted a letter to Dave Bowers during the writing of the *Enthusiasts Guide* in 1996. Bowers paraphrased DeLorey's letter.

"One interesting and very rare variety has a prominent arc-like die clash on the reverse extending from the border down past the right side of the shield into the E of ONE. This clash was caused by the obverse die falling out of the top of the coining press and its edge hitting the interior of the bottom die at an angle."

In my 2007 *Flying Eagle and Indian Cent Attribution Guide*, 2 ed. Vol. 3 - 1870-1889, I questioned DeLorey's theory. It seemed difficult for me to visualize a die falling out of the press and smashing into the lower die in such an off-center way during a press run. Also, such an incident would likely have cracked a hardened die rather than make the marks we see. I included an idea that the clashes were made while the dies were in their soft annealed state. I wrote, *"Perhaps the clash was made while still in the custody of the engraver, prior to the hardening of the dies."*

That is where we are today. No clear explanation. Lots of questions, and very few answers. I do not claim to know all there is about minting procedures, but I do feel that there are logical explanations to answer even the most crazy minting anomalies.

So here are the Indian cent off-center clashes that are presently known. I have also included a two-cent example. Each one tells a story and offers clues to reach a real explanation as to how they occurred. We'll start with the granddaddy of all off-center clashed dies, the 1880 Snow-1.



1880 Snow-1

The 1880 Snow-1 shows a large clash of the denticles and the OF in the legend, which reads backwards. The clash extends through 1/2 the width of the reverse die. Notice how the clash fades just below the tip of the wreath. This is telling, as I think this implies that the clash was put on the die prior to the hubbing process! There is also a raised clash from a denticles on top of the E in ONE.



1880 Snow 1 E in ONE

Remember that on the die, the E is recessed. If the clash happened after the die had the design impressed onto it, this recessed area on the E wouldn't get any clash mark because it is

much deeper than the depth of the surrounding clash. The only explanation that answers this problem is that the hub pushed the clash deeper into the die.

The fading of the clash below the wreath tip also shows a slight deformation of the curve from the rim. When the die is hubbed the field areas will get less of an impression and may naturally deform and if not sunk totally, may slightly rise. A subsequent die polishing flattened the field removing this part of the clash.

Here is one of the earliest known off-center clash marks, an 1860 Type 1 Snow-2. It is rather minor, but it shows us how early this type of die errors began happening.



1860 Type 1 Snow-2

Here is an off-center clash on a Proof die. It is the 1885 Snow-PR1.



1885 Snow-PR1

This die shows a minor clash between the E in ONE and the wreath. This doesn't tell us much about the cause, but it does show us that the off-center clashes can occur on Proof dies.



1889 Snow-31

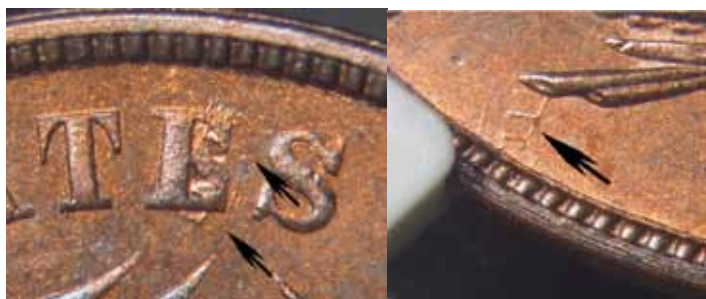
The 1889 Snow-31 shows two medium clashes through the center of the reverse die. The clashes are only visible on the field areas, not inside the design elements. This shows that these clashes can happen multiple times.



1890 Snow-16

The last date known with an off-center clash in the Indian cent series is the 1890 Snow-16. It has one large clash through the center of the reverse die. It is only visible in the field areas. Being in the center of the die may give us an additional clue.

In the two cent series, there is an 1868 die known with two off-center clashes.



1868 Two Cent Die Clashes

This last coin shows two clashed in opposite directions and near the edge of the die. This is the only off-center clash so close to the rim. What does that tell us?

Normal clash marks are believed to be produced during the set-up process, not during striking, provided the dies are properly spaced. If the dies are spaced too close, when the press starts up, the dies will impact each other and make a mark in the fields of the opposing die. Perhaps it could be called a “kiss.” After a kissing incident, the dies are adjusted so that they don’t kiss any more. The marks are there and these will go on every coin until the die is reworked or discarded.

When the press is running and the dies are properly secured, they will not kiss. If a planchet fails to feed, nothing will happen. The dies are spaced so they will just cycle through and make no contact.

So, can an off-center clash occur in the press? If a die fell out of the upper part of the press and was stamped into the lower die during press operation, this would likely be a press-damaging incident. It would certainly leave a mark in the lower die and likely ruin the upper die. I would think that the lower die would crack and also be unusable as well.

A second possible explanation is that the off-center clash happened while the dies were soft and unhubbed with a design. A blank die is machined to have a slightly conical head and is annealed to a very soft state so that it will accept an impression from the hub easily. How did they know the dies sitting in a tray were soft enough to be hubbed? How about they whack a finished die on the head and see how deep the impression is.

Ouch! You say. Maybe the die maker thought that these marks would be gone once the design was sunk, so it wouldn’t matter to them. But when the die is pressed, the marks are pressed deeper into the die, and are still there.

A third explanation is that the clashes were made after the dies were hubbed. The first hubbing was finished and the design needed to be strengthened. The dies were annealed again and to see if they were soft enough, then - *clink!* The edge of hardened die was whacked into the face of the soft die, leaving a series of denticles in the field area.

One unanswered question is why only reverse dies seem to have off-center clash marks. I have no idea, but this lends itself to the theory of the hammer die (obverse die for Indian cents) falling out and hitting the anvil die (reverse die for Indian cents).

Which theory is correct? Could only one be correct, or could they all be causes? Is there another scenario I haven’t covered? Questions and more questions. One thing is for certain, these are some of the most interesting varieties out there.

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1860 Pointed Bust

S2 1860 T1, Misaligned die clash.

Obv 1: (RH) Full R hub. Small die dot on lower eye lid, forehead. Early die state No rim cud.

Rev O: Three small clash marks from the denticles of another die are visible between the left leg of the N in CENT and the diagonal. Die cracks from thr rim at 8:00 into the wreath. Die crack from the rim at 2:30 into the wreath down to the arrows.

Attributed to: Robert Ballentyne

Clash marks from the denticles in the center of the die is a very interesting variety. Probably due to a crude hardness test. {63}



S2 1860 T1, Misaligned die clash.

1868



S7 1868, 18/18 (s).

S7 1868, 18/18 (s).

Obv. 9: (LH) Minor repunching visible under the flag of the 1 and inside the upper loop of the 8. Early die stage: Die striations from 1:00 to 7:00.

Rev. 1: Shield points and olive leaf away from the denticles. Heavy horizontal die file marks off the NE on ONE and NT of CENT. Die crack from the rim at 8:00 down through the olive leaves.

Attributed to: Quent Hansen

The repunching is rather minor. The die file marks on the reverse are quite dramatic. {58}



S7 1868, Die File Marks.

1889

S39 1889, 9/9 (s).

Obv. 40: (B) Minor repunched date. Die line along the base of the portrait.

Rev.: AN: Shield point connected to the denticles. Olive leaf just away.
Attributed to: Quent Hansen

Minor repunching. The die line is an easy attribution point. {63RB}



S39 1889, 9/9 (s).

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1892

★★★



S11 1892, 89/89 (n),

S11 1892, 89/89 (n),

Doubled die reverse.

Obv. 4: (RH) Wide and bold repunching visible on the 8 and on the 9 with a minor separation at the top. There is a die line in the 2 which could be mistaken for a 1, but is only a defect in the digit punch. Same die as S1.

Rev. O: Minor doubling visible mostly on the wreath veins at 11:00. Die crack from the Rim at 11:30 through the top of the shield to the rim at 12:30. Die crack from the rim at 9:30 to the wreath. Die crack from the olive leaf to the rim at 8:00. Die crack from the rim at 2:30 into the wreath continuing down to the arrow heads.

The same obverse as S1. The reverse shows much less doubling than S1. It is a Class II, distorted hub, doubled die. The doubling might be more difficult to pick up on lower grade specimens. {63RB}.



S11 1892, Doubled die reverse.

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1904

S12 1904, 4/4 (s).

Obv. 21: (LE) Minor repunching visible at the base of the 4. Deformed denticle below the 1.

Rev. U: Right shield point connected to the denticles. Left shield point away from denticles. Olive leaf well away from the denticles

Attributed to: Denise Williams

Sharp repunching below the base of the 4. Compare with S7 and S8. {63RD}



S12 1904, 4/4 (s).

1906

S54 1906, 1/1 (s), 6/6 (s).

Obv. 55: (LE) Minor repunching visible under the 1 and inside the lower loop of the 6.

Rev. BC: Shield points well away from the denticles. Olive leaf just away.

Attributed to: Quent Hansen

Fairly minor repunching. Compare the date position with other 1/1 repunched dates. {55}



S54 1906, 1/1 (s), 6/6 (s).

S55 1906, 1/1 (s), 6/6 (s).

Obv. 56: (RE) Moderate repunching visible under the 1 and inside both loops of the 6.

Rev. BD: Shield points connected to the denticles. Olive leaf well away from the denticles..

Attributed to: Quent Hansen

Compare the date position with other 1/1 repunched dates. {58}



S55 1906, 1/1 (s), 6/6 (s).

1907

★★★



S52 1907, 1/1 (e).

S52 1907, 1/1 (e).

Obv. 53: (LE) The 1 is repunched widely to the right.

Rev. AY: Shield points connected to the denticles. Olive leaf way from the denticles.

Attributed to: Quent Hansen

Very similar to S18, compare date position. {64RB}

★



S53 1907, 90/90 (s).

S53 1907, 90/90 (s).

Obv. 54: (RH) Moderate repunching visible inside the lower loop of the 9. Minor repunching on the top of the 0. Die crack through the tops of AMERICA.

Rev. AZ: Shield points connected to the denticles. Olive leaf way from the denticles.

Attributed to: Quent Hansen

A rather minor repunched date. {58}

